



## ADOPTION-LINK, INC.

A Licensed Full-Service Child-Welfare Agency  
Specializing in African-American and Biracial Adoptions  
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U.S. Department of State  
CA/OCS/PRI  
Adoption Regulations Docket  
Room SA-29  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Ref: docket number State/AR-01/96

To Whom It May Concern:

We are Adoption-Link, a for-profit licensed agency in Illinois specializing in the placement of African-American infants only. We have been in existence for 11 years and have placed over 600 babies in the U.S. and increasingly in Canada and Western Europe. These are our concerns regarding the Inter-country Adoption Act:

- 1) **That our birth mothers will be able to make free choices as to where and with whom their babies shall go.** For example, a mother may have placed one child with an out-of-country adoptive family and naturally want a second to be with its sibling, which would certainly be in the best interest of the child. A birth mother may have other reasons in mind, such as a first child being with a particular out-of-country family who, for whatever reasons, cannot take another but have close friends or relatives who could. Further, some birth mothers may have traveled to Canada, for example, or always wanted to live there or perhaps feel the racial climate for African-Americans would be more favorable abroad than in the U.S. We at Adoption-Link, Inc. feel strongly that birth mothers should have the right to choose.
- 2) **That U.S. citizens living abroad be exempt from the Inter-country Act,** so that they can choose whatever adoption agency they feel meets their needs, regardless of whether that agency is Hague accredited.
- 3) **That whenever possible infants should not be kept for more than a few days in interim care "waiting for a suitable U.S. family to be found."** Our agency has many qualified U.S. and foreign families waiting to adopt. Our birth mothers choose a family from a number of families presented to them. The child is placed with that family within one to four days after surrenders are signed.

- 4) Finally, that for-profit adoption agencies with good longstanding reputations, such as Adepton-Link, will be able to become Hague accredited. We have always strived to keep our fees as low and reasonable as possible (current fees are \$8,500 to out-of-Illinois families, \$9,000 for in-state families requiring a home study). Also, we serve a specialized clientele (birth mothers who are having African-American or bi-racial babies and the families who wish to adopt these children) that few other agencies serve.

We ask you to kindly hear our concerns. We feel these are in the best interests of the children we serve. We wish you well in your continuing efforts to shape the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000.

Sincerely,



Margaret A. Fleming, LCSW  
Executive Director



Kim Yaussy Albright, BSW, MDIV  
Assistant Director